

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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## RULES REGULATING ENDANGERED PLANTS ISSUED

Rules regulating endangered and threatened plants have been adopted by the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Associate Director Keith M. Schreiner announced today.

The regulations, published in the June 24, 1977, Federal Register, are somewhat different from those which apply to listed animals and place restrictions on their interstate and foreign commerce, importation, and exportation. The prohibitions also apply to plant seeds, roots, and parts.

"These regulations recognize the important contribution made by hobbyists, commercial growers, botanical gardens, scientists, and others who propagate or deal with endangered plants," Schreiner said. "They are encouraged to continue and expand their activities, providing they do not endanger the survival of any species in the wild. We have adopted a somewhat flexible permit system with a minimum of red tape so as not to impede legitimate activities."

Since plants and animals are so different, regulations for the two groups are different. These regulations impose no restriction on the "taking" of plants since that prohibition under the Act applies only to animals. Also as with animals, there is no restriction on the intrastate sale of plants. However, some local and State governments as well as Federal agencies may have such prohibitions on lands they administer. In addition, no Federal agency can jeopardize such a species or destroy habitat critical to its survival.

Commercial propagators, amateur hobbyists, scientists, and others who cultivate or deal with endangered and threatened plants will have an easier time obtaining permits for restricted activities than they would for wildlife. However, activities involving listed plants taken from the wild will be strictly regulated, Schreiner said.

Application requirements for permits for restricted activities with herbarium specimens or plants obtained from seeds and cultivation are simpler than for those obtained from the wild.

Permits can be issued for a single activity or a series of activities over an extended period of time.

The current rulemaking was proposed June 7, 1976, and takes into account the many pertinent comments received since then as well as those made during the course of four public hearings held last summer on the proposed regulations and two proposed plant listings.

Adoption of these regulations now clears the way for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to list certain plant species as endangered or threatened.

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